

The federal and state governments have each established agencies to assist with consumer complaints. If you are having a problem with a business or product, or you believe you have been cheated, defrauded or harassed by a business, you can file a complaint.

Before You File a Complaint

- Try explaining your problem to the store salesperson that served you, or to the manager or owner of the business.
- Decide what action the business should be taking to resolve your complaint. You should know what you are asking the business to do before you approach them, otherwise your attempt to seek redress will be frustrating for both you and the business's representative.
- If the business's representative agrees to resolve the complaint, put the terms of the resolution in writing and send it back to the business via "Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested." This gives you a legal record that the business received a copy of the terms.
- If the business's representative does not agree to resolve the complaint, immediately put the details of your complaint in writing and send it to the president or owner of the business via "Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested." The letter should include the date of the transaction, the problem, and how you would like the problem resolved. Keep copies for your own records.
- Find out if the business in question is a member of a business or industry association that governs proper business practices. In many cases, these associations may intervene on your behalf to resolve your complaint.

If you do not receive satisfaction on your own, you can seek the assistance of a governmental agency by filing a consumer complaint.

Federal Resources

The [Federal Trade Commission's](#) (FTC) Consumer Protection section can provide some assistance. While the FTC does not resolve individual consumer disputes, your complaint, comment, or inquiry may help them spot a pattern of law violations requiring law enforcement action. It can also help them recognize and tell people about larger trends affecting consumers.

The [Consumer Information Center](#) , a part of the U.S. General Services Administration, publishes a 144 page handbook of valuable information for the consumer. The handbook provides extensive advice, consumer tips, and a Consumer Assistance Directory. The Directory contains listings for national consumer agencies, better business bureaus, trade associations, and state and federal agencies.

To address the challenge of multinational Internet fraud, the United States participates with 19 other countries to offer [econsumer.gov](#) , a joint effort to gather and share cross-border e-commerce complaints.

State

The State's top consumer watchdog is the [Consumer Protection Section](#) of the Louisiana Attorney General's Office. The Consumer Protection Section acts on behalf of Louisiana consumers at large when a business is operating unfairly or deceptively. Their mediators will try to resolve complaints between an individual consumer and a business. The Consumer Protection Section handles complaints regarding: automobiles, telemarketing, landlord & tenant, credit issues, collection agencies, home improvement and construction, home appliances and furnishings, health clubs, travel, charitable solicitations, sweepstakes, work-at-home programs and multilevel marketing/business opportunities. Please visit the Consumer Protection Section [website](#) for more information.